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ABSTRACT

Issues concerning experiential and postsecondary education are considered in six articles. In "Experiential Education for the Community College Student," Sheila Gordon considers the links between experiential and vocational education and suggests that experiential education is especially relevant to the learning styles and objectives of the economically and academically disadvantaged. John R. Valley's article, "Experiential Education and the Nontraditional Student," focuses on older and reentry students and the logistic and measurement problems of experiential education components of special degree programs for adults. Traditional approaches to political internships are emphasized by former Senator Hubert H. Humphrey in "The Case for Public Service Internships: Good Education and Good Government." The need to address changes in work and work attitudes is discussed by Dennis Gallagher in "Work, Experience, and Education," while the potential of experiential education to teach liberal arts and to promote students' personal development is covered in "The Promise of Experiential Education for the Liberal Arts" by Robert F. Sexton. Finally, The Eleanor Roosevelt Institute's article, "Policy Statement on National Youth Service," proposes the development of a federal national youth service. (SW)

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DIMENSIONS OF EXPERIENTIAL EDUCATION

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DIMENSIONS OF EXPERIENTIAL EDUCATION

Robert F. Sexton
Editor

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DIMENSIONS OF EXPERIENTIAL EDUCATION

Robert F. Sexton

Introduction

The use of experiential education in post secondary education has expanded rapidly in the past few years. Colleges, universities, and community colleges one after the other have adopted programs relating education and work. The renewed vigor of cooperative education, the expanded interest in service-learning internships, the visionary plans for "universal youth service," all point to this revitalization.

This would not be news if it weren't for a corresponding boom in public attention for these activities. What's different now is that the higher education media, such as the Chronicle of Higher Education and Change magazine, have discovered experiential education. For the general public, the reader of the local newspaper can find James Reston calling for "new looks at education and work" (a column on The Boundless Resource) or nationally syndicated journalists writing about "universal youth service--an idea whose time has come." Nationally visable institutions, such as the National Manpower Institute and the Educational Testing Service, and trend shaping funding sources, such as the Fund for Improvement in Post Secondary Education and the Lilly Endowment, have also focused on the issue.

This needed attention, taken together, has highlighted one simple point: the uses of a relatively traditional educational process, experiential education, are extremely diverse. As a pedagogical process, experiential education has a wide variety of applications which have yet to be extensively considered. This volume focuses on a few of these dimensions of experiential education and their applicability to institutions of post secondary education.

Some of these dimensions involve broad, unresolved concerns. Among these are the needs of so-called new learners--those who were not routinely involved in higher education before the 1960's. These students may be older, returning the complete their educational work after an interruption (John Valley discusses these), or they may be students of regular college age from social and economic backgrounds not previously engaged in college work (Sheila Gordon discusses these). Recognizing that older persons may find problems in experiential programs designed for younger "inexperienced" learners, Valley suggests that nevertheless the device has significant potential. Sheila Gordon, based at a major urban community college, considers the needs of students whose attitudes toward

education are dominated by vocational objectives and who have not been acclimated to higher education as a socializing process. She emphasizes the need for experiential educational activities which will encourage students to be more aggressive in controlling their futures and to adopt a vision of "career" or "jobs" broader than that fostered by family and society.

Also emerging from these essays is the suggestion that we look anew at the world of work and the relationships of work and education. Dennis Gallagher of the National Manpower Institute questions the very relationships of education and work as now constituted. Experiential education relates to work by potentially enriching the work place in the face of increasing tedium and as a potential tool for retraining persons for new careers and jobs. Gallagher's article is important, in that it calls attention to the need for experiential education, and indeed all education, to confront necessary changes in work and attitudes toward work.

Another theme of these papers is the notion that educational institutions are not the only places where experiential education can be centered. Is a community based learning project, which merges community service and learning without direct supervision from an educational institution, desirable? Should government (federal, state, or local) consider the possibilities of massive youth service programs with educational potential? Such programs have been developed elsewhere, the best example being the Canadian Opportunities for Youth Program. Although OFY does not contain formal educational benefits, it has managed to inspire a large number of young people to community service. A brief "policy statement" for such a program in this country resulting from the "Universal Youth Service" conference sponsored by the Eleanor Roosevelt Institute is included here. Despite its emphasis on unemployment it contains ideas which should be seriously considered in education circles.

Stressing traditional approaches to political internships, Senator Hubert Humphrey provides here his "case for public service internships" in more detail then previously. His arguments might be as well applied to other types of community-service learning activities.

Inside the colleges and universities, the full potential of experiential education has yet to be realized. Several of these potentials are discussed here. My article stresses the potential of experiential education for teaching the liberal arts, especially to students who are not inclined toward abstraction. Another theme relates to the desirability of having an impact on students' personal development. In some cases this means encouraging the student to adopt a broader vision of his or her potential; in other cases instilling the motivation and wherewithal to experiment; and in others developing a sense of personal worth leading to the willingness to take risks or attempt to control conditions.

Finally, in one way or another, all the authors stress the desirability of student initiative in shaping their personal educational goals. It is beyond doubt that the present educational system encourages children to develop a passive attitude toward learning. When these children become young adults they are still not inclined to become creatively involved in the shaping of education. For many college students the authority of the "teacher" is enhanced; they are receptive to being told what is to be learned and how it is to be learned. In one way or another, experiential education is a way of counter-balancing these tendencies.

Other questions emerge which need further examination. John Valley wonders if, for adults, "residence" on a campus might be considered an experiential learning opportunity, since these adult students may already have extensive work experience. His article also asks about the yet undefined relationships between "non-traditional programs" and "experiential education." Dennis Gallagher, while maintaining that all experience is not relevant to university or college education, is critical of higher education for its failure to determine what is really important. His concern was mirrored on the academic side more than a century ago by a critic of "electives": "There are many things important to be known, which are not taught in colleges, because they may be learned anywhere."* Another thought emerging from these articles is the need to consider that all students do not need experiential education activity and that uniformity is not desirable. The students considered in Sheila Gordon's article may not respond to the liberal arts programs discussed by Robert Sexton.

The dimensions outlined in this volume do not imply that the comprehensive dimensions of experiential education have been discovered. On the contrary, restricting and narrow interpretations limit the potentials of education. At the heart of experiential education is a belief that learning occurs in various and often unexpected ways, that learning goes on throughout life, and that it must be integrated with all other activities of the individual. These articles, therefore, suggest that experiential education be explored with the understanding that conditions affecting individuals are not static; that the nature of work, citizenship, and the use of leisure time will change considerably over a lifetime; and that the purpose of education is to help the individual meet these changes with understanding and the ability to respond creatively.

*The American Journal of Science and Arts, XV (1829), p. 308.

EXPERIENTIAL EDUCATION FOR THE COMMUNITY COLLEGE STUDENT

Sheila C. Gordon*

Higher education today is missing the mark--especially as it attempts to serve the "new," "non-traditional" student. It persists in trying to achieve its long-standing objectives, without a fundamental recognition of the way in which it has changed. The small, sylvan college attended by the upper middle class is now the exception. Instead, an institution today is likely to be characterized by a throng of lower-income, academically weak students who daily commute to a concrete campus in search of a route to the social and economic mobility which will separate them from their origins. Higher education can no longer rely on the traditional underpinnings of a collegiate, residential environment and a strong extra-curriculum, nor can it rely on a student's family background being compatible with college's upper-middle-class values or on students having highly developed intellectual abilities. In short, both the "delivery system" and the clientele of higher education have changed. Experiential education--only recently widely recognized as an important strategy in higher education--is especially relevant to the changed nature of higher education and to the learning styles and objectives of the "new student."

VALUE TO THE STUDENT

Experiential education relies on such approaches as the field placement, the internship, and the cooperative education or work-study assignment as a complement to the book-oriented, classroom-based learning style. At its essence, it is a methodology using experience as a laboratory. It is designed to help the student connect theory to experience and to reflect on that experience. It helps the student reinforce or explore concepts he has learned in the classroom; and it helps the student to realize the broad objectives of the college. For example, in the experiential setting, the student can observe the interaction of various economic or sociological phenomena, or can apply the principles of business administration; at the same time the student may develop interpersonal skills, maturity and career focus.

Ultimately, the objective of experiential education is identical with traditional college objectives--that a student be maximally prepared to learn from experience and to bring to bear on his experience the knowledge which he has previously gained. Specifically, with appropriate structure and preparation from the college, the non-classroom field

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assignment helps a student develop intellectually, personally, and in other ways.

1. The student gains a broad understanding of the dynamics of the work place and other experiential settings, and is able to transfer to those settings, the general theories and approaches learned in liberal arts and other courses.

2. The student in the work place or other setting is able to sort out its distinctive values, operating styles, politics, etc.

3. The student is prepared to understand his own values and incentives within the context of that setting.

4. The student learns to measure his own learning, growth and performance in the experiential setting.

5. The student recognizes the need to modify or upgrade technical skills learned in the classroom.

6. Finally, the student moves toward becoming a master of the experiential setting, rather than being controlled by it.

Developing such skills is important for all students but is particularly needed by the so-called "new student" who is academically weak and typically economically disadvantaged. Attending a community college of other open access institution, this student--even more so than the better prepared and situated student--finds it difficult to translate abstractly learned skills into a concrete work setting or to recognize the learning opportunities available in such settings. For example, many community college faculty members who teach in technical areas welcome the field experience; they see the benefits not primarily as reinforcing the technical skills but as helping students acquire the interpersonal skills and understanding--some call these "survival skills"--which permit students to function effectively in the complex work environment which requires a conscious interplay between the application of technical skills and an awareness of interpersonal and institutional dynamics. The data processing student, for example, must recognize who in the organization will use the results of his computer program, how it will be used, how it will fit into other organizational systems in order for the program to be fully useful.

Another illustration may be found in the comparative experiences of two liberal arts students--one from a community college and one from a relatively selective, private, four-year college. When placed on an identical off-campus assignment, the two students tend to have quite different experiences. I have observed, for example, the pattern in connection with a mailroom-messenger work placement in a major public relations firm. The community college student perceives the position as limited and menial; his more advantaged colleague sees the same assign-

ment as rich with opportunities to learn about public relations, to meet new kinds of people, and to become more familiar with the city in which the firm is located.

Impact on Higher Education Goals

The notion of broad preparation for life, integrating both the personal, the intellectual, and the technical is at the heart of the traditional objectives of American higher education. The capacity to function accordingly is a hallmark of the educated person. But while such objectives have constituted the pervasive rhetoric, they have found themselves in competition with an increasing emphasis on discipline-based preparation for graduate study and research. Over this century with the expansion of the university model, undergraduate liberal education has shifted from a general, interdisciplinary approach concerned with broad preparation for leadership, citizenship or "life." The trend has been toward the research values and mode of the university and a narrower, essentially pre-professional undergraduate program geared for graduate study, per se. It is not surprising that students began to react against this emphasis or that among the demands of the armies of student protesters in the turbulent 1960's was the call for "relevance" in the academic program. And the growth in experiential approaches has been one major result.

Experiential education, at its best, structures non-classroom learning so that the student observes and internalizes the history, the philosophy and the policical science he has studied. It provides a different and complementary way of learning the traditional subjects--and it helps make them not only relevant but real to the student. For example, the student on field study in Mexico, forced to speak Spanish and to interpret the subtle "cues" of the environment, comes to understand foreign languages and their inherent link with their cultures. Without the field experience, the classroom experience in foreign language must necessarily fall short of achieving the full objectives of studying other languages and cultures.

The experience of the student in Mexico, the student in a data processing placement, and the student working at the public relations firm all lead a college to revive higher education's traditional concern with the values of general education and personal development. In turn, the needs especially of the "new student" from a relatively disadvantaged background heighten the value of experiential education. Such a student who does not conceptualize or abstract easily, learns best by "doing." How better to imbue a disadvantaged youngster with a sense of history than to have him see that history in operation in his own community--or to grasp economics by working at the stock exchange? How better to motivate him to improve his mathematical skill than by allowing him to see its importance in a competitive work setting?

Experiential Education in Vocational Training

Especially in bringing the traditional benefits of higher education to disadvantaged youngsters, experiential education can perform significant social roles. Specifically, it can help bridge the gap created by the increasing fragmentation of work, education and family. Once complementary, these traditional roles and functions are now demarcated--even alienated--one from the other, leaving the youngster often at sea. School, for example, whether at the elementary, secondary, or college level, now tends to be conventionally academic and wholly separated from the world of work. It provides neither opportunities for the student to examine different careers nor for work experience. As a result, work choices for most students, especially upwardly mobile students, are abstract decisions; and entrance into the world of work itself is often a sharp, confusing, sometimes unsuccessful shift from the young persons' prior experience as a student. The typical community college student selects his career on the basis of, at best, a tangentially related high school experience, and, at worst, the apparent glamour of a field. Large numbers of students, having had a course in key punching in high school and perceiving computers as sophisticated technology, study data processing and computer science. Many--frequently not until graduation--find that their key punching talents are not an index of ability to handle data processing and that the field has more tedium and less opportunity than its public relations image implied. At a college offering field experience, however, misconceptions are quickly corrected, and students can revise their plans with the support and supervision of the college.

The home and family, now wholly separate from the workplace, are typically of little help to the student in selecting a career or developing and understanding of work models. This is especially true among the less affluent, where the young person may be seeking a career and a status different from that of his family. If a student's parent is a factory worker, for example, he probably can offer the searching youngster scarce enlightenment about the seemingly exotic field of computers. The parent, moreover, understands primarily the parameters of a blue-collar job, not the more complex expectations or motivations of a professional or managerial route. In fact, what the student may have learned about work from the home may prove counter-productive. Being on time for work and following directions will have less pertinence for the upwardly mobile youngster than understanding the importance of initiative or willingness to take work home and otherwise ignore the time clock. A college's cooperative education or other work-oriented program can help the student recognize and accommodate differing work values.

The workplace, itself, has limits in orienting students to the world of work. The employer's concerns are understandably for employees who are productive at the level at which they are employed--not consciously or systematically to educate employees about the dynamics or value structure of the work setting or paths of advancement. While for society's needs, employees should move toward maximizing their potential, any one

employer may not share the need, much less the ability to elicit that potential. Here again, a college can play a key role. Because, for example, through experiential education, the student can have a structured exposure to work, the student can also be led to understand the importance of continued learning and retraining. In successful experiential education, the future employee recognizes the need to be a self-directed learner on the job, flexible and adaptable to changing work conditions and alert to the needs for upgrading or career change. In short, experiential education can produce a more aware and less threatened adult worker who is more adaptable than one who has not had the benefits of structured, individualized orientation to the workplace. Work is an experience which can be subjected to study and analysis, and, if done so effectively in a college, the result is an educated individual--an individual educated about work who is better prepared to function in that as an environment.

In short, in many ways experiential education, particularly as it is geared toward wrok, can substitute for, on the one hand, the failure of the traditional school system to provide exposure to the workplace and, on the other hand, the lack of inherent career education or career role models in the family setting; it can also provide the student with the necessary understanding to negotiate his own way through the world of work.

Especially in a static economy, a prime incentive for going to college for most youngsters--especially the "new" student--is the belief that higher education will lead to a better job. One of the several advantages of experiential education is that it can provide a real context for this anticipated job. It can both facilitate the student's practicing classroom-developed skills and the learning of related skills. Thus, experiential education can offer the benefits of vocational training.

But, while there are many links between experiential and vocational education, the experiential approach can be much broader than traditional interpretation of vocational training: narrow training in technical skills. Experiential education equally can permit a student to explore different fields and ways of working in order to determine what is most personally appropriate. It can encourage a student to see the full context in which he is functioning and to perceive multiple learning possibilities which include an understanding of organizational dynamics and the psychology of the workplace. Typical vocational training has tended to be highly specific, as opposed to the broad career education orientation to the experiential view. Vocational training is highly susceptible job obsolescence and makes little provisions for the student's comprehending the complex configuration which makes for career growth and development. Experiential education, at its best, sees work as a key function of life--and interprets the educational process as making a major contribution to that function.

Relationship to Federal Programs

In view of the major societal roles experiential education can potentially play, it should be considered as an instrument of national policy. The existing federal College Work/Study program which is seen primarily as an approach to financial aid, could be construed more broadly and funded to support more generously experiential education--not only as financial aid for the economically most disadvantaged youngsters, but as a federal support for non-classroom education in general. The College Work/Study program currently is limited to nonprofit agencies. Seen as an educational strategy, it--or a parallel program--could be extended to the private, profit section as well.

It is not impossible, moreover, to imagine an ambitious post secondary enterprise, federally supported, possibly federally-run, which could combine the several values of military service, the Job Corps program, the Civilian Conservation Corpos, and ACTION, under the broad objectives of experiential education. Certainly any of these approaches, especially the latter, would be costly, but such cost must be weighed against what society now pays for forcing youngsters into the protracted adolescence of near compulsory higher education.

From a somewhat different perspective, the approach of experiential education should also be applied to the adult who has worked but who lacks the educational framework to maximize the experience. Thus, the federal government should stimulate, if not directly support, programs for continued education for adults geared to enhancing their understanding of what they have or can learn from their experiences. As a society, we have become aware of the need to educate and upgrade adults. We see it, on the one hand, in the frustrations that characterized our work force prior to the current recession, evidenced in the Lourdstown strike and in the general concern with work enrichment. On the other hand, we see it in the self-initiated interest of many adults in returning to school to avoid technological (and sometimes personal) obsolescence.

An Ideal Education Strategy

Ideally, experiential education would be incorporated throughout elementary, secondary, and post secondary schooling. Work and experience would be seen as an integrated part of education and would be built into a curriculum design. The capacity to learn from experience and to maximize the potential on one's experience (including one's work) would be seen as the focal outcome of the educational process. This would require a restructuring of the school itself and its staffing. For example, some interesting models may be seen in the Experience-Based Career Education program funded in four localities by the National Institute of Education. In this approach, high school students spend most of their

time working on projects in the community, in private firms or public agencies. The faculty who supervise the students are skilled in helping them understand the learning that they can obtain in these non-traditional sites. These faculty must have skills different from those normally associated with a conventional classroom teacher: they must be able to exploit the resources of the community and to help students learn standard subject matter from an experiential laboratory; they must be able to draw in as "teachers" those adults with whom students are working in their off-campus projects. With approaches such as these, knowledge can no longer be assumed to be static and contained within the binding of a textbook. It has to be tested in the world of experience.

In short, the optimal realization of experiential education will require considerable revamping of institutions as we now know them. Schools will need different types or differently trained faculty. Schools will have to be structured to make better use of community facilities. Employers will play a role in the career education of students at all levels. Finally, it is likely that federal support (in, for example, tax credits or direct aid to employers or working students) will be needed to stimulate employer participation in the education of young people.

Prospects for the Future

It is difficult, however, to predict the future for experiential education, especially given the current state of education in general. The overall economic retrenchment of society, coupled with the decline in school and subsequent college enrollments, will have two effects; one may argue which effect will predominate. The optimistic view is that the economically-based concern with jobs and the increased pursuit of the student as a much sought after "consumer" will force education, especially higher education, into developing curricula geared to preparation for and recognition of experience, especially work experience. Young students will demand cooperative education, field internships, etc., while the increasingly tapped pool of adults will insist on credit for their work experience and for curricula that helps them improve their understanding of and performance in the workplace. At the same time, government may also act as a stimulus to experiential education.

The pessimistic view is that the economic downturn will frighten students into acceptance of the existing objectives and approaches of schools in the desperate hope that more education means a better job. At the same time, this scenario includes an educational establishment pruned down to homogeneous and tenured staff, defensive, frightened, distracted from educational programs by concern with job security. In this view, government takes a highly conservative and restricted role both with respect to the kinds of programs it encourages and with respect to financing programs at all.

Whether one can be optimistic or pessimistic about experiential education, its future will at least in part depend on the commitment of its supporters and their ability to conceptualize and advocate the program.

EXPERIENTIAL EDUCATION AND THE NONTRADITIONAL STUDENT

John R. Valley*

This essay is concerned with an analysis of some of the interrelationships and interactions of two major themes of nontraditional higher education. One is the theme of experiential education and the second is the theme of older adult students. Those close to nontraditional study have had difficulty agreeing on the dimensions of, or the definition of, this field.[1] Some programs are regarded as nontraditional because of various elements of instructional delivery, and some because of curricular departures from conventional patterns of organizing courses or differences in the content of courses of study that lead to a degree. Some programs are regarded as nontraditional because of the stress placed on the application of various modern technologies. Certainly one of the most common themes of nontraditional study is the extension of educational opportunity to student groups that either were not served previously or were not served well. While concern for the educational needs and aspirations of students older than the conventional college going age of 18-22 has heretofore been a peripheral interest of traditional higher education, this matter is one of the central concerns of nontraditional approaches to higher education.

Similarly, traditional approaches to higher education have stressed the classroom as the place of learning, the faculty member or teacher as the orchestrator of the enterprise, the written word as the transmitter and essence of thought and ideas and the course as the organizing structure for teaching and learning. Further, that learning which can be attributed to the classroom and whatever occurs there is valued and credited toward degree requirements. The requirements themselves are stated in measures congruent with classroom activity, such as credit hours. On the other hand a nontraditional orientation not only values learning outside the classroom, it argues that such learning has positive values not associated with instruction via conventional approaches. A nontraditional orientation looks upon the community at large as an educational resource to be used for achieving the educational designs and aspirations of the student. It is in this sense that nontraditional study includes experiential education in its orbit. Experiential education is manifested in a variety of forms: cooperative education, internships, study abroad, living in a new socio-economic-cultural setting, volunteer work, practicums, etc. The interest in and opportunities for experiential education has apparently expanded in recent years.

While the themes of experiential education and the nontraditional student are both, indeed, a part of the broader general rubric of

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nontraditional study, what happens when we set the two themes in juxtaposition? What about experiential education for the nontraditional student? For example, how is experiential education to be viewed when one focuses on students 35 years of age or older? Does or should experiential education have a different meaning or relationship in the educational program of a traditional age student versus a person returning to college following upon a 20 year long career as a homemaker-mother-housewife? This general issue will be explored in the form of more specific questions to follow. In this essay I do not propose to treat the complex issues involved in identifying, validating and crediting the experiential learning that may have occured prior to the older student's return to college or university study. Sexton and Ungerer differentiate between experiential learning and experiential education, regarding the former as having been attained through experiences prior to enrollment in college either through "...life activities generally or from some specific activity, such as a job or citizenship involvement", and the latter as planned and articulated non-classroom activities carried out under the sponsorship or aegis of a college or university.[2] Therefore I propose to confine my analysis, at this time, to matters of experiential education, i.e. out of class learning carried on under the sponsorship or aegis of a college or university in programs intended for older adult students.

For example, what contributions can experiential education make to the development of the nontraditional student? Would one expect these contributions to be of the same general kind and magnitude that one would expect of experiential education for the traditional age college student?

One highly generalized rationale for experiential education for the traditional age college student is that it serves the purpose of enabling the youth to catch up with their elders. Educators who design work study programs for the youth apparently accept the fact that there is special educational value to be gained in such programs. It would seem also that the attribution of educational value to work study indirectly says that those who have been working for many years have probably learned a great deal that is of educational value. So through experiential education the youth can be provided with an opportunity to achieve comparable learning. Does this mean that experiential education has no contributions to make to the development of the nontraditional student?

There is evidence to suggest that many institutions apparently believe that the value of experiential education for adults has either been achieved or that it is minimal or nonexistent. Institutions in the former camp, and their number is growing and now quite substantial,[3] establish complex procedures for assessing the attained experiential learning of incoming adult students. Institutions of the latter view include no experiential education components for their adult students and do not credit experiential learning.

For example, one institution that offers a masters program in Human

Resource Management normally includes a one year internship for most students. Students who are employed in the area of human resource management at the time they undertake the degree program are excused from this experiential education requirement. Presumably the rationale is that an internship would contribute nothing further to the student. Perhaps this is so, but one wonders whether instead of waiving the internship of an employed student, the institutions should not incorporate the employment situation into an internship setting. The institution would do such things as work with the employer to assist in extracting from the job and adding to the job the same kinds of educational benefits, values, and outcomes as one would presume to find in a well managed internship. It seems questionable to assume that the benefits are automatically present in a job.

The view represented by the preceeding example is not universal. For example, at the College for Human Services, programs designed for a special student clientele and for the purposes of accomplishing occupational as well as educational improvement, incorporate experiential learning in a very central way. Even traditional models of instruction, when provided, are offered at the work site. While all students are employed in agencies cooperating with the college, the job responsibilities and assignments are carefully planned and analyzed to extract their educational significance, not just their work contribution. The students at the college are older than traditional college students.

One can also observe that an experiential education component is rare indeed in the special adult degree programs that lead to degrees such as bachelor of liberal studies, bachelor of general studies, etc. Cyril O. Houle, professor of education at the University of Chicago, member of Commission on Non-traditional Study and author of the Commission sponsored book The External Degree, describes the external degree as "...one awarded to an individual on the basis of some program or preparation (developed by himself or by an educational institution) which is not centered in traditional patterns of residential study."[4] Special adult degree programs of the variety just described are the most common. External degrees, and correspondingly most external degrees for adults, exclude an experiential education component. If this observation is accurate, what is the input of experiential education on these new and important goals of higher education?

The advocates of nontraditional study argue that higher education needs to expand its service to the older more mature adult student. The current absence of experiential education components from special degree programs for adults is sufficiently curious as to warrant some suggestions as to why this is the case. One factor may be the necessity to develop clearer rationales for degree programs oriented toward mature or experienced adult students. So often degree programs for adults contain requirements identical to those found in programs for college age youth: the only differences being matters of schedule, calendar, delivery systems,

etc. However, if the purpose of a liberal education in general is to contribute to and enhance the value development of individuals, and if experiential education is perceived as having a role to play in this regard, then the absence of experiential education components in liberal studies programs for adults needs a fresh look. I suppose one can accept an institution looking at the experiential learning of incoming adult students and understand its conclusion that the adult student via experiential learning has acquired as much or more than the institution hopes for with its traditional youth via some form of experiential education. However, if one believes that the institution's role should be one of enhacing current levels of development and assisting individuals to aspire to and attain higher levels of development, the potential for contribution from experiential education for the adult student is not set aside by previous experiential learning. Rather it becomes a base on which to build.

Some authorities have pointed to the fact that the college age youth in general are at distinct levels of intellectual, moral and social-emotional development.[5] Presumably students 15 to 20 years or more older are at different levels of development in these same domains. If this is so, it is hard to see why these facts should not exert a profound influence on the design of educational programs for college age youth vs. older students.

Undoubtedly there are many very practical problems to be confronted if one attempts to build in experiential education components into special degree programs of adults. These problems can be viewed as clustering under two headings: logistics and measurement. Perhaps the major logistical problem is the question of whether society can offer the range of experiential education opportunities that may be required in an age of underemployment. In the May 1975 issue of Change the editor wrote, "The new phenomenon of underemployment may now become a permanent fixture of national life, and the shock waves should not be long in coming. And if the American job cornucopia has been depleted in relative terms, the implications for education are absolutely immense. They are only now beginning to be talked about. People in education as elsewhere still largely view the present recession as a cyclical and temporary phenomenon. But... a new vision of a post industrial society, higher education and habitually underemployed, now emerges as a likely permanent facet of our age."

Even hoping that problems of underemployment will once again be found to be cyclical and shortrange, there are logistical problems to which the individual adult student relates vis-a-vis experiential education. The adult as student typically shares other roles, such as spouse, homemaker, parent, worker, home owner and consequently does not have the same flexibilities as an unemcumbered youth. An adult whose job may provide the funds for education is in no position to quit that job to accept an internship. However the situation may not be all one way as it appears

on first glance. Richard Graham has written about the ways that voluntary public service programs can contribute to formation and enhancement of values.[6] Perhaps various kinds of volunteer service programs could be utilized to provide experiential learning components for adult students. Further, while in a gross way the earlier characterization of the limitations on the adult is accurate, it probably does not hold equally for all categories of mature adult students. Many retirees, for example, would not be quite as unable to take part in experiential education programs as would much younger adult students. Some women, homemakers, would not find it too difficult to participate in experiential learning components if planners were at all accomodating on matters of schedule or hours.

It might even be profitable to speculate about and possibly extend the concept of experiential learning taking into account typical patterns of relationship between the part time mature adult student and the institutions he or she is attending. The role typically is that of the commuter. Chickering argues persuasively for special values and positive benefits to the residential experience and he asks colleges to consider including flexible short term residential experiences into the programs of those who otherwise would be commuter students. Chickering makes perfectly clear his conviction on this matter is sufficiently strong that he asks all varieties of possibilities for such experience be considered and applied. Would it be heresy to think of an "experience in residence" as experiential education for the part time mature adult student?[7]

Under the rubric of measurement problems, we find that our ability to move successfully to incorporate experiential education components into adult degree programs is hampered by the unavilability of good techniques, process and procedures for making the kinds of assessments that are necessary. Graham points out, for example, that all experiences are not equally educative: that in one study cited "...some experiences are good, some seem to have no effect, and some are apparently bad." He goes on to comment on the importance of the match between the individual and the experience that determines whether an experience is good or bad; whether it tends to stimulate or inhibit the development of the individual.[8] Reflect, if you will, on the measurement implications of this brief quotation and ask yourself how you would proceed to take the educational measurements referred to here especially if it had to be done with large numbers of students.

Complicated as the foregoing may seem these considerations do not exhaust the problem. Hoyer, commenting on a theory of adult learning, says, "How to properly organize and present the material resources in the environment is very much dependent upon just what type of environment is best for the development of specific behaviors. Some sort of environmental measuring system must be used."[9] In the mid 1960's one researcher on the measurement of environments, Richard Wolff, commented

that "...the number of instruments designed to measure characteristics of the environment is quite small when compared with the number of instruments designed to measure characteristics of the individual. Also those environmental measures that are available are usually limited to general measures of social status or economic well-being."[10] While the author has been unable to follow up on the current relevancy of Wolff's assessment, his opinion is that the situation today is not materially improved.

Certainly one recent development that affords some help with regard to some of the student assessment problem is the Cooperative Assessment of Experiential Learning (CAEL) project. In this project which began in 1974, 10 colleges and universities have joined with Educational Testing Service to work intensively on the development of techniques useful for the assessment of experiential learning and experiential education. Approximately 170 institutions were sufficiently concerned or interested in the problems to be addressed by CAEL that they have joined the CAEL Assembly. The Assembly is an institutional membership mechanism designed to facilitate communication between the project and the potential users and designed also to be a forum of the exchange of views and perspective on the outcomes of experiential education. However one of the early problems confronted by CAEL was that the matters needing attention exceeded the financial and staff resources available. Thus CAEL has tried to identify four priority areas with which it intends to work and these by no means exhaust the domain of concerns.

Given the substantial array of unknowns enumerated above, several dangers appear imminent with regard to experiential education and the mature adult student.

(1) If we are indeed moving into a period of permanent underemployment, with the consequence that there will be a restriction in the opportunities for experiential education in work settings, how will we cause this problem to seemingly go away? One way is for higher education program planners to restrict available opportunities to traditional college age youth. Another way is for planners to not tackle what is probably the harder job, namely relating experiential education to the older student vs. programs for the college age youth. If higher education is characterized by either or both of these approaches, it will be found wanting and lose its supporters. On the other hand, for a few institutions this situation may be seen as a special challenge which they will elect to deal with as an opportunity. The response here will be a degree program for adults strongly grounded in liberal arts traditions into which are incorporated workable experiential education components.

(2) We may not be prepared to make the investment in research and development that is needed to provide sound underpinnings for the design of sound experiential learning for mature adult students. Could we not use a few institutions that would publically commit themselves to serve

the mature adult student and research the vital issues of experiential learning, its role, form, function and value for such students? If any institutions have made such a commitment, they are not known to the author.

(3) Even assuming a willingness to research basic issues, the push to expand educational opportunities for nontraditional students may be so strong that programs may come into being in advance of sound theoretical underpinnings. With dismal forecasts regarding students enrollments facing colleges and universities, many institutions have heard the message that there is probably a "market" among the older citizens. The rish, of course, is that poorly conceived and executed programs will prove to be unsatisfactory and disappointing. The consequences could be a further erosion of public support for higher education.

In summary, this essay has attempted to say the following things. That experiential education and the nontraditional student are two major themes of the nontraditional study. That the two themes have not been probed side-by-side or in tandem. That when one does so, apparently there are some tensions that can be observed. That it is not too clear at this juncture what role experiential education will play in the education of the future mature adult student. That while that role is not clear, the author has offered a few suggestions as to how experiential education can be brought to serve the nontraditional student.

Footnotes

[1]Commission on Non-Traditional Study, Diversity by Design, San Francisco, Jossey-Bass, 1973.

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[4]Cyril O. Houle, The External Degree, San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1973.

[5]F. Rebelsky and J.C. Speisman, "Career Education and Liberal Arts," Science, May 2, 1975, Vol. 188, No. 4187

[6]Richard A. Graham, "Voluntary Action and Experiential Learning," Journal of Voluntary Action Research. Volume 2, (October, 1973), pp. 186-192.

[7]Arthur W. Chickering, Commuting Versus Resident Students, San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1974, pp. 132-134.

[8]William J. Hoyer, "The Adult Learner: An Operant Perspective," in Bortner, Raymond W., Adults As Learners, University Park: Pennsylvania State University, 1974, p. 64.

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THE CASE FOR PUBLIC SERVICE INTERNSHIPS:

GOOD EDUCATION AND GOOD GOVERNMENT

Senator Hubert H. Humphrey

One of the most pressing problems in higher education is bridging the gap between formal study and actual experience. And that problem is only the more difficult when the subject is politics.

In perhaps no other discipline is the discrepancy between study and practice so pronounced. The scholarly pursuit of political science, as it is practiced in our colleges and universities, deals in history, in philosophical generalizations and in abstract ideas which have a symmetry and order to them which the real world of working politics does not. This is why our internship programs are so essential to the education of students.

And the students themselves have begun to realize that fact. They have come to understand that there is no substitute for some kind of "hands-on" experience with the actual mechanics of legislation--the complicated and often difficult work that must be done to turn a bill into public law.

Moreover, at the same time that students are asking to understand the system from the inside, the public at large is calling that system into question. They have become skeptical--or at worst, apathetic--about government and politics.

As a result, internship programs have become doubly important, both for their educational value and for their ability to restore faith in government. Unfortunately, there are all too few of such programs. There are good programs which give young people a brief but in-depth, first-hand experience of observing and examining our government in action in Washington--including the Senate Youth Program, Close-up, and Presidential Classroom.

Other programs enable Congress and the Executive Branch to have people of high capability work in positions of responsibility for several months. One good example is the "fellows" program operated by the American Political Science Association. Colleges have endeavored to bridge the gap between the classroom and the legislative chamber through such programs as Washington Semester, the seminars of the Robert A. Taft Institute of Government, and individual programs such as the Macalester College Press Intern program.

That sounds like a lot, but it isn't. The existing number of internships cannot fill either the educational needs of the students or the

staff needs of the Congress. And often they are accompanied by little or no money, with the result that most students conclude their internship service in debt. Under present policy, House members are allotted only $1000 a year for interns, and Senators have to find their funding out of their salary allowance. And the situation at the White House and the rest of government is not much different.

We have to be able to do better than that. I have introduced the Political Leadership Intern Act of 1975, to establish a national internship program for college students, which is a step in the right direction. It would provide grants to colleges and universities for the planning, development, and administration of internship programs. Any institution of higher learning in the country could apply. The bill provides for a limited stipend of $540 for a twelve-week, off-campus, full-time internship. Under that system, some 7,400 interns could serve the government every year--approximately 17 from each Congressional district.

But legislation alone is not enough. We have to make the public aware of the enormous value of this educational experience. Aside from giving a generation of young Americans the opportunity to participate in government, it performs a real teaching function--and one which, ironically, schools are not able to provide: the sense of accomplishment which comes from doing a real job and seeing the outcome.

And it must be understood that interns do work at serious matters. Over the years, I have had over 300 interns working in my office, and I know what the experience means to them. When an intern sits down to a job, whether it is researching issues, working with administrative problems, providing constituent services or helping to draft legislation, he or she is aware that what they are doing really counts--that it is, in a large or small way, contributing to the public good. And that is a feeling which cannot be gotten by taking an exam successfully or speaking up in a seminar.

Furthermore, internship fulfills another pedagogical need. It gives the student a realistic, unromantic look at the business of politics. This is especially important to students whose image of a career has been shaped by movies or television, which tend to simplify and romanticize the characters they present. So internship reminds the student that the job of representing the public is hard work, and it is not always exciting. It involves a lot of paper work, a lot of discussion and compromise, and a lot of research into the issues. And it may mean simply having a good bill defeated for one reason or another.

But even that experience, painful as it may be, is a valuable lesson. It gives the student a glimpse of something which he cannot find in a textbook: a complicated variety of human beings, none of them perfect, who come together in the public interest. And that is a lesson worth learning, especially for those who intend to make politics and

and government a career.

We also have to make the public aware of how much the government needs the interns. Interns work hard at meaningful assignments which make a contribution to the legislative process. It is no secret that Congressional offices are busy places, and that the professional staff have their hands full. Consequently, every intern's assignment, large or small, would be the responsibility of a staff member who is already very busy. And when we can give our young people an invaluable education at the same time that we take some of the burden off our public servants, then that is not only good policy--it's good economics.

It also is good schooling. This country is undergoing a re-evaluation of our educational systems. We have begun to take a hard look at some of our time-honored principles to see if they are still relevant. Educators are beginning to wonder if our traditional reliance almost exclusively on "book learning" is warranted in today's world of scarce jobs and specific skills needed to fill them. As we re-think our educational priorities, we ought to pay particular attention to internship programs and their potential as educational tools. We ought to find ways to coordinate internship experience with the student's college credit for their service as well as a reasonable stipend.

In addition, we have to be able to convince educators that internship programs are meaningful alternatives to classroom study. By the end of the last decade, the rigid boundaries between work and learning were beginning to be removed. Students were demanding, and colleges often allowing, academic credit to be given for some kind of "field experience," or participation in a project outside the school.

It was inevitable that some excesses would occur, that students would receive credit for simple participation in an unsupervised activity where they might not have learned a great deal. And some faculty members became skeptical of the idea. However, internships are uniquely suited to controlled, supervised learning. They are suited to a careful evaluation of the student's performance and the depth of his understanding. Because few interns work alone, and because they are constantly being guided and advised by the professional staff, their work is under continual scrutiny--as much or more so than they would receive in a traditional college course.

Moreover, the program would be good for the schools. Because of its attractiveness to students, it could serve to bring back the many young people who dropped out or planned not to attend college, either because they felt it was "irrelevant" or because they feared that it could not give them real work experience and salable skills. With the unemployment levels for our young people at intolerable rates, the chance to get on-the-job experience, and the chance to put an internship on a job resume,

could bring more new students back into higher education.

Both students and employers alike are asking for the kind of education which prepares them directly for a career. Students know that the competition is fierce. And employers are concerned with holding down the training costs for new employees. Internships, and the increasing emphasis on work-study programs of all kinds, can thus serve both their needs.

And it can serve another need as well. Students who completed their college work in the traditional liberal arts or sciences usually entered the marketplace with little or no practical experience. As a result, they were obligated to "shop around" for the kind of work they wanted by taking two or three jobs in a row over a short period of time. Unfortunately, in the present state of the economy, that is no longer possible. Internships can serve the student by allowing him or her to see what the job is like, and whether it is for them.

The success of a full-scale government internship program, which can expose thousands of young Americans to the public service, could provide the incentive for similar action in almost every aspect of our national life. It could provide the next generation with the experience they need to find the work they want. And it could supply government with highly-motivated and competent workers to get the job done.

But even more important, it could give America's leaders a very important commodity--the exposure to new insights and fresh thoughts. It often happens that busy men and women have looked for so long at a problem that they become trapped in a point of view. They take things for granted. This is the time when a student, without a background of technical exposure, and who is looking at the problem for the first time, can be of incalculable value.

We cannot afford to neglect that value, that opportunity for good education and good government.

WORK, EXPERIENCE AND EDUCATION

Dennis Gallagher*

Education and work unfold as separate aspects of people's lives.

This is, of course, a generalization. It is valid, however, to the extent that the formal educational processes have been isolated in the early years of people's lives and the work processes have become identified with a narrowing number of years in the middle of life.

Even where individuals break out of these "time-traps" the interaction between the education and work elements of their lives often remains weak. This is a matter of concern from many dimensions. For instance, shouldn't the educational level of the individual be reflected and maximized in the character and quality of his or her life's work? Recognizing that one's life's work and one's job (or career) may not be precisely the same thing, it should be a matter for concern that the requirements of jobs are not keeping pace with the rising educational levels of the population. It should also be a matter for concern that, from the individual's perspective, the path from education to wrok often seems obscure.

The focus here, however, is not so much on the important and related matters of maximizing the value of education in the work place or of improving the transition from school to work as it is on maximizing the value of experience in the context of formal education. What are the possible contributions of experience to one's educational development? The identification and development of experiential contributions to education seems to me to be a legitimate and particular concern of educational institutions and educators.

Almost everyone I know who is interes'ed in the possibilities for integrating experience and education has a personal "work experience" story to tell. Like home movies, these stories frequently are of greater relevance to the people telling them than to anyone else. Recognizing the unlikely applicability of this to my own experience, I nevertheless relate these experiences, since they have strongly influenced the veiws expressed here.

While in college I worked. As a freshman, I swept out the gym on Tuesday and Thursday afternoons; as a sophomore I worked as a "hasher" in a sorority house (a job with high intrinsic rewards but of little renunerative value); as a junior I had become sufficiently skilled at the waiting

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game to land a part-time job at a small but nice restuarant; and, as a senior I was elevated to the rank of part-time assistant manager and back-up bartender in that same establishment. During two summers (with the help of the university placement office) I worked in a gambling casino at Lake Tahoe: first, as a "change-boy" selling change to folks foolish or masochistic enough to play the slot machines; then, as a twenty-one dealer; and finally, having become adroit enough at calculation to quickly pay off on a $13 winning bet that pays $5:$2, as a craps dealer.

There is no question in my mind that these work experiences were, in a most fundamental sense, educational. These jobs also put money in my pocket which, in turn, paid for my college education, gave me a measure of economic independence and made me feel responsible. Additionally, these experiences provided me with needed opportunities to succeed or fail in settings other than that of the school. I gained confidence in my ability to perform work sufficiently useful to someone that I was actually paid for it. This was a morale boost some might not need but I did.

Was there something about these experiences that should have been of interest to my university, that should somehow have been developed and built on or assessed and translated into a currency of academic value?

My answer is an unequivocal "no." The experiences had significant value (even educational value) in my life but in their own terms and not in terms that appropriately could be converted to the context of my chosen educational institution and program. Had I been attending an institution whose purpose it was to develop hotel or restuarant managers my answer might be different.

Which leads to a continuation of this work experience saga. As a graduate student I worked as an intern with a foundation for a year... after which (as programmed) I returned to the university for further study. This internship opened my mind to the significant potential for furthering educational objectives through the mixing of education and experience.

As an intern I was brought into contact with resources, information and perspectives which complemented the educational program (public administration) I was pursuing. This outside experience added new dimensions to my understanding of what was going on inside the institution. My sense of the adequacies and inadequacies of my educational program were altered as a result of this outside experience.

Some opportunities did present themselves to draw on this outside experience inside the educational institution. In general, however, I was struck by how ill-prepared the university was to capitalize on this experience as a means of achieving the individual's as well as the institution's educational purposes. Relatedly, I was disturbed by the seeming disinterest of the institution in attempting to assess and translate the value of such experiences into educationally meaningful terms.

A certain tension (which may be a potentially constructive by-product of some education-experience exchange arrangements) arose between some of the interns and the faculty and administration. The interns were very satisfied with the internship experience. A few of the interns, however, felt that some form of academic credit ought to be granted for the experience. Others felt that, as a follow-up to the experience, much more could have been done back at the university to draw out the benefits of these newly gained perspectives. The inclination of the faculty and administration, on the other hand, was to let the internship experience stand on its own. Clearly these experiences could stand on their own... and from many perspectives not just those of education. Even with hindsight (which, I've discovered, far from being 20:20 is as often as fuzzy as foresight) this seems a convenient but insufficient approach. The full potential of these experiences is not likely to be captured, either in terms of institutional renewal or individual learning where practices are not translated into the philosophy, curriculum and creding systems of the institution.

The lesson to be drawn from this, I suppose, is that the pragmatics and politics of joining experience and education are not likely to be easy or smooth... even where the parties involved have a desire to cooperate.

For instance, the apparent increasing willingness of secondary schools to permit and help develop internship experiences for students during the final semester of their senior year (argued for, at least in part, because course grades for this final semester aren't put on the transcripts sent to colleges for purposes of determining admissions) is a step in the right direction. However, providing the internship experience in the last semester of the last year conveniently circumvents the matter of how these experiences might best be incorporated into educational practice and curricula. Similarly, simply providing a semester's academic credit for a semester's work or service experience may demonstrate either a too easy willingness to grant credit for work or an inability to identify what elements (surely not all?) of the experience are sufficiently related to the individual's and institution's educational objectives to merit the granting of academic credit.

In many instances, efforts to draw the educational value from experience are isolated in the internship phase itself. During this time weekly seminars may be held, papers required, the writing of experience journals encouraged, some course work may even be structured around these experiences. These efforts, again, represent a forward step in the integration of experience with education; however, the degree of the educational institution's commitment to experiential education perhaps can be as much or more discerned by examining what happens before and after the internship... that is by the extent to which outside experience is permitted to affect practices inside the education institution.

Setting up separate offices of experiential education in colleges or universities seems appropriate. They can argue for the benefits of experiential education as well as help identify, develop, coordinate and implement these programs. These offices, however, may be prone to some of the same weaknesses as departments of continuing education... they might exist on the fringe of the university, supported by special funding arrangements and with tentative links with the various academic departments whose interest in, sympathy for and understanding of experiential programs may not always be great. In the final analysis, the institutional impact of experiential education is determined by the extent to which it seeps through to the attitudes and practices of the academic departments and their faculty.

The point is certainly not to be critical of these basically constructive developments. It does seem important, however, to recognize that these approaches represent natural, but not final, evolutionary steps on the way to maximizing experience as an instrument of educational development.

It would be surprising, indeed, if efforts to interrelate education and experience did not meet with some considerable resistance. After all, the primary concern of society during most of this century has been with keeping youth out of work and longer in school rather than with getting them into work. During this time an antipathy developed toward the interrelating of work and education. Even where young people did work while going to school... which occured at an increasing rate during the last decade... in the vast majority of cases these work experiences developed independent of the schools and, in many instances, in spite of the schools. Part-time educational attendance has been as discriminated against as has part-time work. Summer work, if additional money is needed to pay for college, is viewed positively, but work while in school, in general, is seen as a distraction from and dilution of further educational attainment.

What has been said may imply that the problems, faults and doubts are all on the educator's side of the street. This isn't the case. Employers have become accustomed to getting along without the labor of youth. It is now an established practice in most American corporations, for example, to not hire anyone under 21 years of age. Twenty-one is the minimum age for entry into the Civil Service. The age of people admitted to and participating in union apprenticeship programs has gradually gone up with the average age of participants being well over 21. Even in the voluntary and service sectors, increasing attention to professionalism and credentialism has acted to exclude youth from participatory roles.

A healthy regard for these forces of resistance is necessary partly because they are powerful (and, therefore, cannot be ignored except in theory); but also because they guard those paths to educational reform

that are shoddy and jerry-built.

Despite the much recent talk about the benefits of mixing experience and education, its philosophy or conceptualization remains relatively underdeveloped. The objectives (educational and otherwise) and the longer range consequences for educational institutions of mixing education and work seem, at this time, to lack foresight and planning. Resistance by the educational establishment focuses those of us who support these practices to think, plan, experiment, and evaluate these developments and draw from them useful policy and program implications.

To the extent that this happens, proponents of experiential education are forced to be more than proselytizers of some new "educational" venture. As this is done, almost as many differences are likely to be revealed among those who espouse the benefits of mixing education and experience as between the proponents and opponents of the practice itself.

The present confusion of purpose is, in part, expressed in the profusion of vocabulary intended to be descriptive of this practice. "Experiential education," "action-learning," "internships," are terms used, at various times, (a) interchangeably and (b) to indicate differences among varying approaches. We are hopefully in a phase of development where the compatibilities as well as incompatibilities among these conceptions and approaches will become clearer.

Experiential education developments, despite the above qualifications, represent a crack in the door which opens onto a new range of educational and work relationships and options for youth. At this point, my concern is that educational institutions be receptive to but remain critical of the notion that "work experience" can be a valuable part of a person's formal educational development. The corollaries of this proposition are (a) that education institutions not restrict (through administrative and other barriers) the capacity of students or prospective students to alternate or mix work and education; and (b) that these same institutions endeavor to identify, encourage and certify those aspects of work or service experience that are appropriate aspects of the institution's educational philosophy and purpose. To the extent educational institutions can draw the connections between "experience" and their educational objectives this experience ought to be credited and, beyond that, incorporated into the general educational approach (administrative, curricular, faculty selection and training) of the institution. To the extent these connections can't be drawn, the practice of mixing education and experience should not be discouraged but also should not be credited.

If the objectives of educational institutions and programs are defined to encompass concern for the effective transition from education to employment of their students with the provision of knowledge, skills and other attributes associated with this process, the educational

relevance of work experience will become defined and the experience can be certified accordingly. If it can be verified that outside experiences are effective means of achieving other learning objectives they should also be encouraged and credited.

The more educational participation and attainment has become associated with career opportunities the more educational institutions have been willing (and have had) to assume responsibility (and credit) for the career opportunities that follow the education. This association is a logical one only to the degree that education is a factor which determines occupational success or failure. While we find occupational success does not follow educational success, can we justifiably attribute this to the poor quality of lack of relevance of the education? It seems only fair to recognize failure if credit is assumed in the instances of success. Since the links between further educational attainment and getting and succeeding at a job are now being subjected to far more sophisticated examination, there is increasing motivation from all sides (from students, parents, educators, legislators, etc.) to validate the power of these linkages, to reinforce them and/or to create meaningful alternative linkages.

Pressure to clarify objectives and purposes in relation to the world of work is being exerted on post secondary educational institutions. This requires a rather difficult assessment by educational institutions of their purposes and the degree of accountability they feel they can legitimately assume for their student's transition from education to employment, and ultimately for his or her performance at work.

Experiential developments have considerable relevance in that they may prove instrumental; first, in helping an educational institution improve the quality of its relationship to the work world, and secondly, in creating an alternative route to jobs and careers.

The promise of service and work experience developments are many. From the perspective of education, work or service experience can serve as an additional instructional technique or device for realizing a range of learning objectives (not just the vocational). They can provide another means of extending the resources of the university into the community. They can become part of a broader educational strategy to relate aspects of the university program and curriculum to the concerns and priorities of the communities in which they are located. They can act as a means of bringing new and more varied kinds of resources (human and capital) to bear on the educational process. And they can improve the capacity of educational institutions to help individuals make the transition from education to employment and more. Service or work experience programs can be part of postsecondary educational institutions' efforts to define their educational missions (particularly concerning their

responsibilities for helping students make the transition to employment) and improve the quality and relevance of educational programs.

Beyond whatever benefits service or work experience developments may have for formal education, more significant is the potential for these arrangements to create meaningful alternative forms of participation in education and work. I believe that had I continued on the occupational course my early work experiences (waiter, bartender, etc.) might have taken me, I never would have regretted, nor would society have had reason to regret, our mutual investment in education. The other side of this is that even though these work experiences were not rewarded in academia, and even though they did not lead to more permanent career opportunities, they contributed in important, but not easily definable ways, to my development.

We have come to associate more education with more pay and more occupational status. Educational institutions have claimed a monopoly on the routes to far too many jobs and careers, and the manager without a college degree has joined the ranks of endangered species. The world of work today is more technical and more specialized than it was in the past; but, it is not nearly as technical or specialized as many would have us believe. In many instances, degrees are no more than social screening devices... and not very good ones at that. Educational credentials do not always certify competence and it's an open debate the extent to which they should. Besides, technical and specialized skills can be learned through other means than through 16 or 18 years of consecutive educational attendance. Service and work efforts can be part of society's efforts to revitalize new paths and patterns to career success.

To merely speak of this longer range potential for service and work experience is to quickly realize how far we are from its fulfillment. The problem is not only one of sorting out the ends but of designing and developing the means. It is also to begin to recognize that work and service experience are not a singular concern of educational institutions. If the impetus for and interest in these developments stops there, the potential for such arrangements will be severely limited. This is true not only because without the interest, cooperation and participation of work and service institutions there won't be enough experiential placements available, but, more critically, there is a need for these developments to grow within an environment with perspectives and interests besides those of educational institutions.

To a significant degree to proper and principal locus for the development of these arrangements may reside in more broadly constituted community based organizations. Experimentation and experience needs to be encouraged with the development of such community organizations. Willard Wirtz and the National Manpower Institute, in a book entitled The Boundless Resource, recommends the establishment of Community Education-Work Councils. Such Councils would be composed of an Executive Committee, on

which local employers, labor union officials, educators, counselors, public officials, parents and youth would sit; an Executive Staff responsible to the Committee; individuals delegated to work with the Councils by schools, colleges, businesses, labor unions and professional organizations and, volunteers--retired business and professional people, skilled craftsmen and factory workers and young employed men and women. The primary responsibility of the Councils would be to improve the processes of youth's transition from school to work. More specifically a Council's basic responsibilities would include:

- Attempting to develop the maximum number of activities in the society that provide the kinds of exposure for youth that yield beneficial insight into adult roles and responsibilities. Helping to remove obstacles to youth's participation in such activities.

- Seeing to it that the various support services, such as counseling and guidance, occupational and career information, placement, etc. are identified, developed and operate toward this end.

- Attempting (a) to communicate the benefits of such experiences to the community and (b) engaging individuals and institutions in cooperative efforts which develop and monitor experiential programs for youth.

- Devising measurable criteria against which efforts can be evaluated and against which those involved in running such programs can be held accountable.

In other words, Community Councils would attend to a range of individual and societal needs that are now simply left unattended as a primary focus by any institutional structure. Those needs have to do with observing, experiencing and evaluating adult roles. These needs also include gaining personal insight into oneself and one's interests and abilities, in making the transition from a setting which primarily serves or relates to youth to one that primarily serves or relates to adults.

Fortunately, interest appears to be growing within government (at various levels) and among individuals associated with the various constituencies which should be involved (educators, student groups, employers, unions, etc.). There is some promise that over the next several years a bank of experimentation, experience and evaluation will be developed serving both the ends and the means for providing work or service experience opportunities.

THE PROMISE OF EXPERIENTIAL EDUCATION FOR THE LIBERAL ARTS

Robert F. Sexton*

A multitude of advantages have been claimed for experiential education. Some say that it relates "theory to practice," allowing students to test in the "real world" ideas which otherwise would be "mere theories." Others use out'of'the'classroom experiences, practica, or internships, as something like "on-the-job-training" for professional students. Others say the nonclassroom experience is an opportunity for students to develop their career potential, either through exploring various career possibilities or by honing skills through "hands on" experience. Others, adopting a broad view of the mission of post-secondary education, see the need to integrate service and learning, and see service-learning internships as opportunities for the student to develop a "service" mentality while providing real services to those in need and expanding the service function of the college or university. Others see the experiences as "broadening," opening up new cultural vistas through "cross-cultural" experiences, travel abroad, or immersion in sub-cultures in the United States.**

While these rationales for experiential education are valid, my interest is in a use for experiential education that heretofore has been dealt with only casually. In more specific terms, experiential education is used here to mean planned-in-advance experiences, in which the student undertakes some personally determined learning objective through a nonclassroom activity with the guidance of others, in the educational institution and outside. There is a need to integrate this type of education into the curriculum to expand the potential and enhance the effectiveness of liberal arts education. I think that experiential education can serve a vital role in assisting with the most traditional goal of undergraduate education: providing students with an understanding of the world around them in its historical, social, and economic contexts, at a time when this aspect of education is suffering great difficulties. These difficulties stem from the seemingly irreversible dehumanization of a technological society, and from social and economic forces which have challenged the basic philosophical contentions of liberal arts education.

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Social and political conditions have encouraged many to call for a renewal of the humanities. In part, this demand results from the disasters technology seems to forecast for the humanities; from recent political episodes (most notably Watergate); from movements toward career and vocational education; and from modern popular culture. Developments in the last fifteen years or so have convinced humanists that they are not being heard and that technology has won the day. In a most apocryphal voice, one educational leader recently stated the need for the return to liberal consciousness, "The choices we make between war and peace, between freedom and restraint, between personal greed and public dedication, material and spiritual satisfactions, should be determined by the character and quality of our education. But are they now?"[1]

At the same time, twentieth century technological culture and the resulting sense of personal powerlessness and inadequacy have made some realize that individuals need a sense of personal identity that is not being provided presently. One analyst of this situation has gravely suggested that the industrial culture of our universities and colleges, "repress their (individual) energies, denies them instinctual satisfaction, blocks their imaginations. In short, it creates the psychological conditions which make a new humanization of cultures seem impossible, since it makes the concrete transcendence of the present appear utopian."[2]

Finally, values long associated with the liberal arts education have been more subtly challenged on other fronts, often unintentionally. The drive toward vocational education and training for specific careers is forcing interest away from the humanities and social sciences. Economic conditions have resulted in the tendency of student populations to reject "general" courses in favor of marketable or technical academic programs which students hope will save them from impending unemployment. The overdue move toward equal educational opportunity has generated a new group of learners who do not approach higher education with esoteric goals. On the contrary, these students, in many cases older, from less advantaged economic backgrounds, or from minority groups, see the degree as a passport to employment and one which does not require any "frills." Finally, the "management" movement in higher education and the trend towards statistically valid measures of accountability may result in the elimination of programs in higher education which do not seem to be quantifiable. Taken together, these conditions reflect what some have called a "crisis" for the liberal arts.

While there are many potential reactions to this dilemma, one possible means of revitalizing these values is through experiential education. While the use of experiential education in the liberal arts should not be seen as a panacea, and is certainly not the only means of renewal, it can add a new and vital dimension to most traditional programs. In general, I suggest that it is the reflective potential of experiential education that relates to the liberal arts, and justifies its use in the tradition-

al undergraduate curriculum. This is not to deny that experiential education, internships, practica and other approaches have professional and vocational benefits; but there are greater benefits than these alone. What are these noncareer and nonvocational advantages?

One possibility is the goal of assisting students in understanding the nature of man in the environment through the study of history, literature, and philosophy. Despite the intensity of these goals in the rhetoric of higher education, instructors have no doubt wondered whether their students are memorizing materials by rote to pass examinations. These students may have little concern for the disciplinary methodology which may becloud the presentation of a broader, more general, knowledge. These students may have little aesthetic appreciation, or a sense of identity with, past personalities, and never really experience "reflection" upon the broader implications of life and learning.

The possibilities of this broad learning taking place in a different setting than the standard classroom were made obvious to me while administering a state government internship program. For several years prior to that experience I had tried to interest American history students in southern politics by assigning T. Harry Williams' biography of Huey Long. Students in upper level history courses reacted negatively to the book--it was a disaster. It was too long (approximately nine hundred pages) and its detail was oppressive to students with a limited awareness of the relationship between politics and administrative manipulation. Quite logically they questioned why they needed to read nine hundred pages to get the "information" they thought the book contained; the "understanding" the book could have provided was unavailable to all but a few.

But my seminars for full-time undergraduate interns in state government provided an interesting reverse. All the interns were in situations where they did real work with administrators of government agencies that reported to the governor. The interns were aware of the implications of gubernatorial power through their internship assignments, not the seminar. When the seminar reached the point of reflecting on the role of contemporary governors, Huey Long was again assigned. The book took on new relevance and meaning for the students. They could identify immediately with both Huey Long and his administrative milieu. "My agency would have reacted differently in that situation!" "The governor did that to our department," were their reactions, indicating that each student had a peg on which to hang the information in his or her mind. Moreover, the wealth of detail and analysis in the book, formerly a hindrance, now became an advantage; a thorough analysis of the milieu of one governor and one state political/administrative structure in the context of practical experience brought understanding.

The interns, therefore, each had a personal experience with historical understanding; they placed themselves and their agencies in the

context of an historical experience. And this was not a matter of their relating theory to reality. They realized that this book, this "history," was in fact reality. Historical consciousness dawned upon them when Huey Long became as real as their current governor; the difference that they read about one and observed the other directly was inconsequential.

Through this same approach, it may be possible to motivate students not naturally attuned to so-called "theoretical" learning. According to Ralph Tyler, the idea that the mental process of "abstraction" comes before "application" is a middle-class belief which was developed in the period when most students were being educated for "professional" work and others were being trained for less cerebral "jobs." From this theory it followed that all persons, despite intellectual or developmental differences, were to be first taught principles in the mode of educating potential professionals; application was to follow. But Tyler contends that this notion is faulty; abstraction does not necessarily precede application, especially for persons oriented by background toward a pragmatic vocationalism. His arguments imply that we may not reach the "new" college student with an "abstract" approach, if we are indeed reaching the "old." My experience confirms that abstract curricula are meaningless to many of today's students unless they have some reason, some motivating factor, to appreciate and use the abstraction. In the same way the student interns sensed the importance of studying Huey Long, others might be motivated to reexplore the more theoretical work of their college curricula if prompted by some kind of nonclassroom experience for which they could have a real "feel."

Of course, the reverse may also be true for some students. It has long been assumed that the college experience should provide the student with the means of generalizing from one experience (e.g. reading books) to a myriad of additional experiences and also fabricate a conceptual framework for these generalizations. In other words, the abstraction can provide the individual with the reason to explore the experience, and when the idea and the experience are thus observed, they both have meaning. Having meaning, they will be better remembered, used again and again. The abstraction interacts with other ideas and experiences which have also been generalized, and finally enters into the total makeup of the individual. It would be hoped that theory, when merged with an experience (not just contrasted with it) would be remembered and become more useful in the future.

What are other relationships between experiential education and liberal arts education? One of the current dilemmas facing educators, which was partially spurred by Watergate but has root causes in international politics and industrial development, relates to matters of moral choice, ethnical decision making, and the potential of citizenship. Making choices among alternatives, all of which seem to be somewhat unattractive, seems to be the constant dilemma of modern man, says Sidney

Hook, and the humanities should help the individual to deal with this dilemma. He says:

> as I understand the philosophical bequest of the humanities to the modern world, it reinforces our awareness of the indispensability of human choice in every moral situation, and the dignity of human choice as constituting the glory and tragedy of man. Indeed, the operating effectiveness of human choice is what we mean by freedom. In the end, power can be tamed, if at all, by the human spirit which alone is the carrier of cosmic value, and by the use of intelligence in the service of human freedom.[3]

Hook argues that the individual with an educated intelligence has a responsibility to analyze information which attempts to influence the individual by "sophisms, propaganda, and brass bands."

> And it is precisely here that the educational agencies of a democracy have an enormous responsibility. They must teach not merely the facts, but how to test them, how to relate them to problems, and how they bear upon relevant alternatives. They must also stir imagination and sensibility in envisaging the effects of proposed modes of conduct on the human situation.[4]

It is precisely these questions of moral choice and the relationship of intelligence to problems, (the ethical virtues that Hook ascribes to the humanities) that are thought to be lacking, both by the general public and educators themselves, in co[illegible] programs. It is possible that this is because of inadequate pedagogy used to convey these ideas. The taking of these intelligent choices cannot be learned in a vacuum. On the contrary, decisions--the determination and solution of problems--are made in the context of dynamics influencing the individual in the most personal ways. It is the academic hope that the "context" will be provided by understanding gained through the humanities and sciences; these will provide the framework for taking in information and basing decisions on it. But as we have dramatically seen in public life, there is no guarantee that the abstract context will hold up, or that it will be remembered, or that the intellectual value orientation will not be thrown out at the first confrontation with hostile circumstances.

It is possible, therefore, that an integrated context of learning and experience may provide not only a means of remembering abstractions as discussed above, but also a way of reinforcing them during and even after the time in which they are being tested by hostile conditions. Since the values Hook advocates fall largely into the area of appreciation and sensitivity, they cannot be adequately tested in the mind of the

undergraduate learner as he or she sits through a lecture on Plato or on the abuse of power. It might be necessary to test these values outside the classroom in a supervised experiential situation where the learner has a personal confrontation with his or her values and decisions, assesses the results, and returns intellectually to the abstraction either for new insights, for reinforcement, or to modify the abstraction.

Another example of the interrelationship of experiential education with liberal arts education is the possibility that skills, as well as concepts and perspectives, must become part of liberal arts education. Arguing for the applicability of some of the techniques used in professional education to more generalized undergraduate education, H. Bradley Sagen has outlined what he calls "liberal skills." Sagen argues that while it is true that knowledge is a proper end in itself, educators must understand that there are proper uses to which systematic knowledge can be put and that adding a practical component to pure knowledge, as in the professions, is a key to revitalizing undergraduate education.

He observes that "if we continue to teach only the scholars' conception on knowledge to undergraduates and fail to convey the importance of perspective and consequences, we may well also fail to control complex technologies and social systems." Among the task oriented competencies Sagen suggests are these:

--- Professional problem solving; that is, coping with "the kind of problem for which the solution does not begin with the review of the literature." Application to real problems will require multi-disciplinary approaches, dealing with conflicting values, working under the pressure of time with inadequate resources and information, and so on.
--- Organizational and interpersonal skills of the kind needed to cope with corporate, governmental and urban settings in which most of us will spend our lives. Component skills in this area would include leadership training, empathetic skills, and self-development competencies.
--- A related skill is "the ability to interpret complex information to those less well educated."
--- Other skills mentioned include decision-making, dealing with large quantities of complex information (perhaps by use of computer), the process of design, and legal reasoning.[5]

Although Sagen says his list is not fully developed, it does suggest that we have the capability of looking at liberal arts in terms of skills and in gaining some insight about the teaching of liberal arts from professional education. It may be, therefore, that some of the same

professional methods, such as the supervised internships, are the best ways of testing and developing these liberal skills. Another advocate of experiential education has reinforced this point in stating objectives of assisting "students in applying techniques acquired in liberal arts education to the study of contemporary social issues. These techniques include not only modern research skills but the analysis of the ethnical basis on which policy is or should be based."[6]

One way to implement these ideas is demonstrated by a new experimental project in which students in public service internships are specifically charged with exploring the ethical bases for decisions in public institutions. The students involved in the program, while spending a full-time internship in a public agency of their choice, are involved in an interdisciplinary humanities seminar taught by faculty members in political science, philosophy, and the philosophy of education. The seminar is an attempt to develop the "participant/observor" approach to an integrated experience. Drawing upon the experiences of the students themselves, weekly journals, and extensive readings, the seminar considers such issues as the limits, potential and demise of citizenship; the value structure of public agencies; alienation; constitutionalism in the political process; and human development as it effects the way individuals resolve personal values and conflicting pressures in a political situation. Through weekly meetings it is hoped that students will come to some personal reconciliation, not as judges of the community, but of their own role as actors in a situation requiring insight, the application of humane knowledge, and personal reconciliation of serious ethnical concerns.[7]

The ideas expressed in this paper have been discussed with colleagues extensively, and there seems to be no doubt the ideas have not been proven by either pedagogical research or resort to superior logic. Undismayed, however, I suggest that they rest on the conviction that education must try alternative approaches if it is to save itself from a dilemma of technology--which could well be its undoing. True, there is no hard proof that experiential education will meet the needs outlined here, but the proof can come by experimentation and by serious evaluation.

Undoubtedly, there are pitfalls in experiential education as it relates to general education. In the first place there is the danger of seeing one method, in this case experiential education, as a panacea. Secondly, there is a dichotomy between the experiential education goals discussed here and those often associated with vocationalism or career education. James Hitchcock in his article, "The New Vocationalism," has pointed out the possibilities of transforming students' well-intentioned desires to become involved in the "system" to a benign vocationalism through the federal government's development of career education. Hitchcock contends that the "new vocationalism" has the potential of robbing the liberal arts and humanities of the ability to help people understand their actions as well as perform them. This is no doubt a danger, since

there is pressure from both inside and outside educational institutions, from faculty members concerned for their students' chances for work and students who themselves are concerned about their inability to find work, and from the federal government as it moves toward the career education. Ideally, these issues might be resolved, although this seems impractical because of institutional constraints, and because some students are inclined toward career-related learning.

In sum, despite the pitfalls, it seems likely that experimentation with experiential education in the liberal arts may hold significant potential for undergraduate instruction. In the mode discussed above, it also holds potential for the development of positive attitudes toward service as the integral part of life. It holds potential for helping the individual reconcile personal needs and preferences with a life-time of work which may, because of the changes in the nature of work robbing it of potential human satisfaction, allow the individual to cope with the situation in creative ways. Furthermore, it produces the tangible benefits of exposing the liberal arts student to work and adding to their repertoire of experiences when they do enter the labor force. But at the same time we contend that there are broad goals, associated with the general development of the individual, which can be effectively taught through experiential education, and suggest that these be explored in more detail than they have been.

Footnotes

[1]Earl J. McGrath, "The Time Bomb of Technocratic Education," Change, September, 1974, p. 28.

[2]Norman Birnbaum, The Crisis of Industrial Society (New York: Oxford University Press, 1969) p. 161

[3]Sidney Hook, Education and the Taming of Power (LaSalle, Illinois: Open Court, 1973), p. 200

[4]Ibid.

[5]H Bradley Sagen, "The Professions: A Neglected Model for Undergraduate Education," a paper presented at AAHE Regional Conferences, 1972-73, p.2

[6]Shelton L. Williams, "Policy Research in Undergraduate Learning," Journal of Higher Education, April, 1974, pp. 296-304

[7]Barbara K. Hofer and Robert F. Sexton, "The University of Kentucky American Ethic Program," in Earl J. McGrath, General Education and the Plight of Modern Man, (Indianapolis: The Lilly Endowment, 1976).

POLICY STATEMENT ON NATIONAL YOUTH SERVICE

The Eleanor Roosevelt Institute*

America's youth has demonstrated eagerness for a meaningful work experience,--a responsiveness tc programs that give them a chance to strike out on their own, and an opportunity to serve their communities and their fellow men. This has been shown time after time, in the CCC and the NYA, in the Peace Corps, VISTA, ACTION, and the Youth Conservation Corps, under both Democratic and Republican administrations.

It is little short of a national disgrace that 40 years after such successful programs as Franklin D. Rossevelt's Civilian Conservation Corps and the National Youth Administration, whose inspiration was Eleanor Roosevelt, that twenty per cent of our young people should be unemployed, a rate that rises in inner cities to forty per cent. In some inner cities, in fact, fifty per cent of the young blacks are unemployed.

Equally disturbing is the growing consensus among economists and manpower specialists that even with an improvement in the economy, joblessness for those under twenty-one will continue at abnormally high rates. Youth unemployment is not cyclical: it is a product of such factors as technological advance, a vast increase in the youth population, the entry of women in unprecendented numbers into the labor market. It will not go away when the recession fades.

Youth, while should be a time for testing and self-development, a time when work values and habits are formed and strengthened, when service is freely given to ideals which are compelling, is becoming instead a dead end of shrivelled hopes, diminished self-respect, and desperate ventures into crimes and drugs and into cults and non-religious sects,--phenomena which affect all classes--farm, suburb and inner city ghetto. Corrective and mental institutions are filled to bursting. People live in a state of chronic fear. As long as one out of five youths continue to be doomed to unemployment, and other youth feel their lives to be without purpose, one of America's greatest resources is wasted and spoiled.

The times call out for a new, imaginative and broad-ranging pledge to our young people. Within a commitment to achieve full employment for all able to work, an added commitment must be made to America's youth so

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*This statement results from the Universal Youth Service conference sponsored by the Eleanor Roosevelt Institute of Hyde Park, New York, in May of 1976. It has been sent to the platform committees of the Democratic and Republican parties for their consideration. While the statement focuses on the benefits of "service" for the personal growth of young people, and upon the bleak youth unemployment picture, its message should be of importance for those interested in experiential education.

that they will have the opportunity to serve, to learn, to develop skills, and to work.

We propose the establishment of a national youth service, not as a special or emergency program, but as a regular and ongoing part of America's national commitment to its young people. While the basic commitment must be public, the private sector--including the corporations of America, organized labor, philanthropy, and the churches--has a significant role to play.

We propose that such a program shall be financed and administered on a joint federal-local basis; that it invite the largest measure of local initiative and youth participation; that it consolidate all federal youth service projects; that it be voluntary but subject to a national youth registration that will ensure that every young person is offered counselling and information on the opportunities for education, service, and training available to them.

We propose that such a federal program shall provide opportunities for education, including education to prepare youth for public service careers. Young people should be encouraged to come forward in service to others--in urban schools and hospitals, in homes for the elderly and the mentally retarded, in environmental reconstruction in woodlands and ghettos, in a universal program in which every young person wishing to serve may do so.

We propose a program that will provide occupational training and work opportunities that will bring the world of work and the institutions of education and community services closer together--opportunities that will give young people the sense that they are both valued and needed and that they are being welcomed into the world of adulthood and responsibility.

What better way to memorialize the 200th anniversary of the Declaration of Independence, a document many of whose signatories were young men, than for the great political parties of our country to pledge America's youth the right to the pursuit of happiness through opportunity, learning, and fulfillment.

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